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THE JFACC AND SMALL SCALE
CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

by

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14. ABSTRACT Should a JFACC Command Airpower Employment in Small-Scale Contingency Operations? For an airman, the obvious answer to this question is yes. If airpower employment is conducted in any type of operation, it should be commanded by an airman. However, this answer is much too simplistic for reality. According to joint doctrine, the JFACC is the commander in charge of joint air operations when employed as part of a Joint Force. However, most SSC operations employing joint airpower are of such limited scope and duration that the designation of a Joint Force is probably not warranted. Furthermore, there is no consistent definition of the JFACC's role published in joint doctrine. The inconsistent definitions of the JFACC's role provide conflicting and ambiguous guidance to the CINC, which is exacerbated when airpower employment is contemplated in the SSC environment. According to current joint doctrine, the answer to the above question is no, and that is a serious problem. Airpower Employment in SSC Operations Airpower employment in SSC operations is significantly different from other force employment operations. When surface forces are employed in this environment, they have a unifying doctrine that articulates force employment considerations. The doctrine is coherent, relevant, and most importantly, accepted by all of the services. Airpower has four separate service doctrines, and absolutely minimal guidance published in joint doctrine upon which to rely for employment in an SSC environment. The SSC environment is unique in that effective operations achieve strategic, operational, and tactical level objectives concurrently. Joint doctrine does not address this paradigm for airpower employment. Joint Doctrine, the JFACC, and Airpower The JFACC is repeatedly defined in joint doctrine, but each definition is different and somewhat conflicting. The need for a JFACC in larger-scale military operations is adequately articulated in joint doctrine, and the services agree with it. However, this is the point where agreement ends. Like the Army and Navy, air forces (every service has one) are a maneuver force capable of achieving both strategic and operational objectives when used appropriately. As a maneuver force, airpower should be commanded by an airman, just as an army is commanded by a soldier or a navy is commanded by a sailor. Airpower is generally thought of as a supporting force by land and naval forces, or rather an adjunct means to achieve land or naval objectives. While this may be the case in larger-scale operations to a certain extent, it is certainly not the case for SSC operations. Airpower will be employed jointly in the future. Fiscal constraints demand it, and Goldwater-Nichols mandates it. Airpower, when employed as part of a joint force to achieve policy objectives in the SSC environment, should be commanded by a JFACC to ensure unity of effort through unity of command. The JFACC must have coherent and relevant guidance provided through joint doctrine to enable him to do his job effectively. Consequently, a service consensus on this subject is long overdue.					
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Preface

As an action officer in CHECKMATE, I spent most of my time exploring new ways to employ airpower primarily in smaller-scale operations. After reviewing Operation DESERT STRIKE, I wanted to know why this mission was conducted in the manner in which it was. It was very frustrating to see airpower used in a piecemeal operation which could not have achieved the stated policy objectives. The frustration experienced over Operation DESERT STRIKE resulted in this paper. My goal was to determine why CINCs and JFCs have such difficulty designating a JFACC (e.g., airman) to command Small-Scale Contingency (SSC) operations. The findings were much different than I expected. Joint doctrine really is lacking where airpower and SSC operations are concerned as well as the defined role of the JFACC. As an airman, I think it's important that we address these deficiencies to provide military commanders a relevant guide for employment of U.S. forces.

I would like to thank Major Paul "Condor" Berg of Air Command and Staff College, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. As my research advisor, he provided invaluable guidance and exhibited unusual patience which enabled me to answer a question which has bothered me for some time. The experience was rewarding and professionally satisfying.

Abstract

Should a JFACC Command Airpower Employment in Small-Scale Contingency Operations?

For an airman, the obvious answer to this question is yes. If airpower employment is conducted in any type of operation, it should be commanded by an airman. However, this answer is much too simplistic for reality. According to joint doctrine, the JFACC is the commander in charge of joint air operations when employed as part of a Joint Force. However, most SSC operations employing joint airpower are of such limited scope and duration that the designation of a Joint Force is probably not warranted. Furthermore, there is no consistent definition of the JFACC's role published in joint doctrine. The inconsistent definitions of the JFACC's role provide conflicting and ambiguous guidance to the CINC, which is exacerbated when airpower employment is contemplated in the SSC environment. According to current joint doctrine, the answer to the above question is no, and that is a serious problem.

Airpower Employment in SSC Operations

Airpower employment in SSC operations is significantly different from other force employment operations. When surface forces are employed in this environment, they have a unifying doctrine that articulates force employment considerations. The doctrine is coherent, relevant, and most importantly, accepted by all of the services. Airpower has

four separate service doctrines, and absolutely minimal guidance published in joint doctrine upon which to rely for employment in an SSC environment. The SSC environment is unique in that effective operations achieve strategic, operational, and tactical level objectives concurrently. Joint doctrine does not address this paradigm for airpower employment.

Joint Doctrine, the JFACC, and Airpower

The JFACC is repeatedly defined in joint doctrine, but each definition is different and somewhat conflicting. The need for a JFACC in larger-scale military operations is adequately articulated in joint doctrine, and the services agree with it. However, this is the point where agreement ends. Like the Army and Navy, air forces (every service has one) are a maneuver force capable of achieving both strategic and operational objectives when used appropriately. As a maneuver force, airpower should be commanded by an airman, just as an army is commanded by a soldier or a navy is commanded by a sailor. Airpower is generally thought of as a supporting force by land and naval forces, or rather an adjunct means to achieve land or naval objectives. While this may be the case in larger-scale operations to a certain extent, it is certainly not the case for SSC operations.

Airpower will be employed jointly in the future. Fiscal constraints demand it, and Goldwater-Nichols mandates it. Airpower, when employed as part of a joint force to achieve policy objectives in the SSC environment, should be commanded by a JFACC to ensure unity of effort through unity of command. The JFACC must have coherent and relevant guidance provided through joint doctrine to enable him to do his job effectively. Consequently, a service consensus on this subject is long overdue.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Command is central to all military action, and unity of command is central to unity of effort.¹

—Joint Pub 0-2

Is the designation of a JFACC necessary for airpower employment in Small-Scale Contingency (SSC) operations? The answer to this question lies in the defined role of the JFACC, how airpower is employed in this environment, and the future role these types of operations will have in achieving policy objectives.

Significance of the Problem

Large-scale military operations characterized by DESERT STORM are giving way to Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) operations designed to contain crisis situations. According to the National Security Strategy (NNS), “These operations will likely pose the most frequent challenge for U.S. forces and cumulatively require significant commitment over time.”² Furthermore, the United States has steadily increased its reliance on airpower to achieve limited national security objectives: Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, Operation NORTHERN WATCH, and air operations in Bosnia are just three “high profile” examples. The fact that airpower can have an overwhelming effect upon policy objectives in certain situations is quietly acknowledged

among the services by the fact that airpower employment in this environment is increasing. To think otherwise would imply ignorance on the part of senior decision-makers.

A major factor driving capability in this area is money. Airpower is incredibly expensive, and current assets are reaching the end of their service life. Procurement trends are currently down 63 percent from their high of \$120 billion per year in 1985 and are predicted to stagnate in the range of \$45 - \$50 billion per year.³ While modernization will provide a limited increase in combat capability, it is clear that a decisive advantage will be obtained for U.S. forces through joint operations. Future SSC operations employing airpower will, by operational necessity, be employed in a joint environment. This is consistent with the current National Military Strategy (NMS) which states “Our military must be ready to fight as a coherent joint force—fully interoperable and seamlessly integrated.”⁴ Military leaders’ perceptions of joint air operations have slowly changed to accept this inevitable operational necessity. See appendix A, note 1, for further elaboration. However, concurrent development of joint doctrine, with respect to airpower employment in SSC operations, has been slow at best. As the need for decisive employment becomes more critical to our national security strategy, the need for a responsive policy tool becomes more critical. The effectiveness of airpower to address this need can only be fully realized through joint doctrine. It must effectively articulate the employment considerations for airpower in the SSC environment.

Is a JFACC Necessary for Airpower Employment in SSC Operations?

U.S. airpower effectiveness has been mixed in SSC operations since 1986. Operation EL DORADO CANYON, the U.S. airstrike against Libya, did achieve limited

policy objectives. However, other airstrikes haven't been as successful: The continuing saga of airstrikes against Iraq after the Gulf War highlights the difficulties associated with airpower employment in the SSC environment. The recent failures, see note 2 in appendix A, of airpower to achieve policy objectives in SSC operations take on a much greater significance when viewed in light of the emerging engagement environment - the future environment in which U.S. military forces will operate. See note 3 in appendix A for a detailed description of engagement environment. Regional conflict, political instability, and WMD proliferation are just a few of the complex factors affecting the emerging engagement environment. Quite honestly, the United States is the only power in the world able to respond globally with little or no warning, and in certain situations, this response will be in the form of airpower.

Airpower employment in the SSC environment is unique in that required forces may not be assigned and/or readily available to the tasked Combatant Commander (CINC) unless they are part of an existing task force or JTF. The required forces will be chosen for their mission specific capability, and will require assets from different combatant commands and from more than one service component. Conversely, airpower employment in large-scale military operations overcomes this constraint by having the appropriate assets made available through the TPFDD, which is published as part of an OPLAN. For the most part, OPLANs are not used in SSC operations because each mission is unique, the result of crisis action planning. Assets are made available to the tasked CINC on an *ad hoc* basis as required. Additionally, with these types of operations, airpower employment may be planned, directed, and controlled by a commander other than an airman.⁵

The unique planning and employment considerations of airpower employment in the SSC environment are not adequately addressed in joint doctrine. Simply stated, there is no comprehensive or authoritative guidance for the tasked CINC to conduct effective airpower employment as part of a SSC operation. Additionally, the defined role of the JFACC is inconsistent throughout joint doctrine. According to capstone and keystone joint doctrine publications, the JFACC is defined as the Component Commander responsible for the coordination of air interdiction and counterair missions.⁶ However, according to supporting joint doctrine, the JFACC is defined as the Component Commander responsible for the development of a comprehensive air operations plan.⁷ The cumulative effect of the inconsistent definitions of the JFACC's role, and the absence of doctrine for airpower employment in SSC operations results in ambiguous guidance for the CINC, and the subjugation of airpower to a supporting role with respect to surface forces. According to AFDD 1, *Air Force Basic Doctrine*, "Air and space forces are inherently maneuver forces with unmatched organic lethal and non-lethal firepower. These forces have the capability to orchestrate maneuver on a global scale and directly achieve strategic objectives."⁸ Airpower is a decisive combat arm capable of achieving strategic, operational, and tactical level objectives without the support of surface forces when applied appropriately. As a decisive combat arm, it should have an airman as its commander, and specifically, a JFACC, whether employed in the context of a major theater war or a SSC operation.

Notes

¹Joint Pub (JP) 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, 24 February 1995, III-1.

²The White House, *A National Security Strategy For A New Century*, May 1997, 12.

³Department of Defense, *Report Of The Quadrennial Defense Review*, (Washington D.C.: Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997), 20.

Notes

⁴Department of Defense, *National Military Strategy of the United States of America: Shape, Respond, Prepare Now: A Military Strategy for a New Era*, (Washington D.C.: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1997), 4.

⁵Joint Pub (JP) 3-56.1, *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations*, 14 November 1994, vi.

⁶Joint Pub (JP) 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, 1 February 1995, GL-8.

⁷JP 3-56.1, vi.

⁸Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1, *Air Force Basic Doctrine*, September 1997, 37.

Chapter 2

Joint Doctrine and Air Operations in Small-Scale Contingencies

Doctrine provides a military organization with a common philosophy, a common language, a common purpose, and a unity of effort.¹

—General George H. Decker, USA

Overview and Focus

This chapter will focus on the role of joint doctrine in U.S. military operations, and specifically its effect upon airpower application in SSC operations. The U.S. military experience of WWII, supported by operations in Korea and to a lesser extent Vietnam, formulated the conceptual template for the development of a military doctrine based upon large-scale, force-on-force, maneuver warfare. This trend in doctrine development culminated in the Air-Land Battle doctrine designed to confront the massive conventional armies of the former USSR on the plains of central Europe. The development of this doctrine by the U.S. Army, and supported by the U.S. Air Force, was somewhat relevant for the context in which U.S. forces would be employed; large-scale force-on-force military operations. Consequently, Air-Land Battle doctrine's focus on large-scale maneuver operations of surface forces relegated air to a supporting role. The ability of airpower to achieve strategic effects in the conventional environment was not considered. The strategic affects of airpower employment were relegated to the nuclear realm.

Two significant recent events have fundamentally changed the contextual elements which are shaping the emerging engagement environment. The first change was the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986, followed by the collapse of the USSR. The result was a fundamental change in how U.S. forces are employed, and a dramatic shift in foreign policy strategy. Additionally, during this time of change, advancements in technology were beginning to have a profound impact upon the military IOP. In fact, these contextual changes are occurring so rapidly that the ability to change joint doctrine to reflect the emerging engagement environment has become a significant challenge for military leaders. The requirement for doctrinal change is not unique to the military professional. What is unique, however, is the speed at which the contextual changes are driving doctrinal change. While the nature of the threat and the contextual elements which shape it are uncertain, the fact is that joint doctrine must evolve if it is to remain relevant.

Technological advancement has been instrumental in changing the nature of modern warfare. In fact, for airpower, technology has redefined the engagement envelope. This fact in itself is significant. However, without a relevant doctrine to guide its use, it's nothing more than a capability, disjointed and ineffective. Current joint doctrine is an effective guide for the employment of joint airpower in larger-scale military operations based on the principles of war as outlined in JP 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*. However, joint doctrine does not address the unique capability of airpower in the SSC environment. In this case, technological advancement has far outpaced doctrine development.

The use of airpower in the SSC environment presents the CINC with a unique set of considerations and capabilities which, if used appropriately, can achieve limited political and military objectives. This chapter will explore the complex doctrinal issues which guide the employment of airpower in the SSC environment.

Doctrine and the Combatant Command

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986

Intent. The Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act had one overriding objective, to ensure unity of effort in combat operations for U.S. forces. To accomplish this goal, the Combatant Commands were empowered to do the nation's fighting with the CINC solely responsible for that command's mission. In effect, Goldwater-Nichols ensured unity of effort by mandating unity of command.

To aid the CINC, Goldwater-Nichols forced the military to take a hard look at doctrine, specifically joint doctrine, given that joint warfighting was now a reality. The result was the development of an effective and relevant joint doctrine which "govern[s] the joint activities and performance of the Armed Forces of the United States."² In essence, Goldwater-Nichols empowered the CINC to do his job and joint doctrine provides him with the authoritative guidance to ensure success.

The Combatant Commander (CINC). The Command Authority (COCOM) of the CINC, is vested only in the CINC and is not transferable.³ He alone is responsible for establishing subordinate commands, and the command and control hierarchy within his combatant command.⁴ Strategic planning considerations, force composition, mission development, and execution considerations of the command are at the discretion the

CINC with advice from the NCA and the CJCS. While his authority is derived from COCOM, he must conform to the authoritative guidance articulated in the capstone joint doctrine publications, JP 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, and JP 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*.

JFACC. The JFACC is the Air Component Commander of a joint force and will be designated by the JFC when appropriate.⁵ The use of component commanders facilitates the JFC's strategy and course of action development. They are the JFC's experts on specific force employment. The component commanders are "...expected to orchestrate the activity of their own forces, branches, and warfare communities. In addition, they must understand how their own pieces fit into the overall design and best support the joint force commander's plans and goals."⁶ Hence, the JFACC is the JFC's airpower employment expert.

Joint Doctrine

Joint doctrine is indispensable to the CINC. It provides for unity of effort, with "... all effort be[ing] directed toward the achievement of common aims."⁷ It is the overarching blueprint which integrates the unique contributions each service brings to the fight, creating a synergy not otherwise achievable. Joint doctrine is the guide by which U.S. forces are employed. In addition to joint doctrine, service doctrine provides the CINC with an effective guide to employ the unique combat capabilities each service brings to the fight. Vietnam provides an illustrative example of the necessity for joint doctrine. "At the tactical level of individual engagements, superior American firepower consistently carried the day against an enemy willing to endure staggering losses. At the strategic level of overcoming hostile ability, the United States was unable to prevail."⁸

Relevant joint doctrine integrates service doctrines with each other and the strategic aims of the operation. Thus, through joint doctrine, unity of effort upon the battlefield is achieved overcoming the strategic difficulties the U.S. military experienced during Vietnam.

Joint doctrine is organized hierarchically to provide all levels of command within the combatant command the relevant guidance to successfully execute their mission. The capstone joint warfare doctrine document, JP 0-2 provides the CINC with “...basic organization and command and control relationships required for effective joint operations.”⁹ Additionally, this document “...link[s] joint doctrine to national strategy and the contributions of other government agencies and alliances.”¹⁰ JP 0-2 is authoritative, “...as such, this doctrine will be followed except when, in the judgement of the commander, exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise.”¹¹ The keystone joint doctrine publications provide the “doctrinal foundation” for the rest of the supporting doctrine for that series.¹² The hierarchical relationship of joint doctrine is critical in that each level of doctrine must support the other levels to provide coherent and consistent guidance for commanders throughout the chain of command within the combatant command. If there is conflicting guidance between joint and service doctrine, joint doctrine will take precedence.¹³

The JFACC and Joint Doctrine

As stated previously, the JFACC is the JFC’s airpower expert, his chief air strategist. However, according to JP 0-2, “The JFACC is normally the supported commander for air interdiction and counterair and may be the supported commander for strategic attack.”¹⁴ Conversely, the naval and land component commanders are “...responsible for the

synchronization of maneuver, fires, and interdiction.”¹⁵ Furthermore, “Land and naval force commanders designate the target priority, effects, and timing of interdiction operations within their AOs.”¹⁶ The roles and functions of the land and naval component commanders defined in capstone joint doctrine publications are consistent with one another and clearly articulate their responsibilities to the JFC. However, the responsibilities of a JFACC imply nothing more than the coordinating authority for air operations within an AOR. To further complicate matters, JP 3-56.1, *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations*, states that “The JFC will normally designate a JFACC to exploit the capabilities of joint air operations through a cohesive joint air operations plan and a responsive and integrated control system. When a JFACC is not designated, the JFC may plan, direct, and control joint air operations.”¹⁷ The disparity in joint publications as to the definitive role of the JFACC cuts right to the heart of the problem in designating a JFACC when conducting SSC operations.

The contrasting definitions of a functional component commander and the JFACC in joint doctrine provide the CINC or JFC with conflicting guidance as to the responsibilities of the JFACC. Furthermore, JP 3-56.1, is a supporting joint doctrine document and provides guidance only to the JFACC if one is designated. The result is confusing to say the least. It would appear to the layman that individual service component commanders do not want to give up their air assets to a JFACC. Furthermore, joint doctrine is written to support that hypothesis. Given that there is no authoritative guidance concerning airpower application in SSC operations available to the CINC, it is easy to see why a JFACC is usually not designated for these types of operations. The contrasting definitions of the JFACC’s role in joint doctrine highlights the complexities

associated with the designation of a JFACC to command SSC operations when the employment of airpower is mandated.

SSC Operations and Joint Doctrine

SSC operations are just one of the many missions the U.S. military performs in the MOOTW environment. The application of airpower in a one-time operation to achieve specific political and military objectives, or “airstrike,” is a specific type of SSC operation. According to Joint Pub 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War*, “Strikes are offensive operations conducted to inflict damage on, seize, or destroy an objective for political purposes.”¹⁸ Like any large-scale military operation, successful MOOTW operations rely upon the basic principles of warfare defined in JP 3-0 which are further articulated in JP 3-07 for effective joint force employment. Airstrikes are no exception to this premise. In contrast to surface forces, air forces have not developed a unifying doctrine to guide their employment in the context of the SSC environment. The surface forces employed in this environment have a coherent doctrine, which effectively guides their employment. In fact, they are part of a unified command, USSOCOM. The designation of this command, with a mission to engage in special operations, of which SSC operations are just a part, mandates the development of a relevant joint doctrine which ensures unity of effort on the battlefield. Airpower employment in the SSC environment demands the same doctrinal support as surface forces have.

Doctrinal Issues Concerning the JFACC and SSC Operations

For large scale military operations there seems to be little, if any, disagreement with respect to organizational structures as outlined in JP 0-2. There is virtually no disagreement on the need for designating specific component commanders and establishing the command and control hierarchy necessary to carry out the JFC's mission. However, when contemplating the use of airpower in SSC operations, there really is no guidance in joint doctrine which adequately addresses the required or desired command structures necessary to ensure unity of effort. In accordance with existing joint doctrine, these operations are of such limited scope, the designation of a JTF or task force is probably inappropriate. According to JP 0-2 "The mission assigned to a JTF should require execution of responsibilities involving a joint force on a significant scale and close integration of effort...."¹⁹ Moreover, since JP 0-2 does not provide guidance which specifically addresses force structure for SSC operations, the designation of the required force structure and command and control hierarchy is at the discretion of the CINC.

It is unlikely a CINC would place ground forces, however small the force or limited the scope of the operation, under the direct command of an airman, and the same can be said of naval operations. However, there seems to be no hesitation whatsoever in delegating command of air forces to a commander other than an airman. See note 4 Appendix A for an example. Furthermore, this premise is supported by joint doctrine. As stated previously, JP 3-56.1 states in part that **"When a JFACC is not designated, the JFC may plan, direct, and control joint air operations."**²⁰ It is clear that when using airpower in SSC operations, the operations are of such limited scope, that the

guidance in joint doctrine implicitly demands that the JFC plan, direct, and control air operations, whether the JFC is an airman or not.

Another doctrinal issue affecting the application of airpower is the number of air forces in the U.S. military. It's a fact that the U.S. Air Force has the preponderance of aerospace assets in the U.S. DOD. It's also a fact that each service department has its own air force. Furthermore, for any single air force to employ effectively in conventional operations, that air force will, by operational necessity, have to employ with assets from another air force to achieve a unity of effort. This is the very nature and purpose of Goldwater-Nichols—joint employment of U.S. forces to accomplish the mission. These facts are not disputed by any of the services; however, airpower employment considerations are debated rather fiercely and often divisively by each. The result is predictable. Each service has a different, and at times, completely divergent doctrine on how best to employ airpower in any context, let alone the SSC environment.

The role of joint doctrine is to integrate joint forces effectively at the strategic and operational level, not at the tactical level of war. However, in SSC operations, the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war are inextricably intertwined to achieve the desired political and military objectives. Conducting SSC operations with surface forces does not present the CINC with significant planning and execution problems. As stated previously, these surface forces belong to a unified command and have a relevant doctrine which addresses the unique characteristics of the SSC environment. The lack of a unifying and coherent doctrine addressing joint airpower application in this environment which transcends service inclinations and parochial considerations prevents its successful application. Given the unique nature of airpower application in this context,

a comprehensive joint doctrine that is captured in the capstone, keystone, and supporting levels of joint doctrine is a prerequisite for successful joint air operations in the SSC environment.

Observations

The enactment of Goldwater-Nichols has empowered the CINCs to do their job without the individual service departments obstructing their mission with parochial concerns. COCOM and joint doctrine are the tools the CINC has to ensure unity of command and effort to accomplish his mission. However, the emerging engagement environment for U.S. forces is changing the focus of military strategy and the very nature of joint force employment.

The U.S. military conducts smaller-scale contingency operations to vindicate national interests. These operations encompass the full range of military operations short of major theater warfare, including humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, disaster relief, no-fly zones, reinforcing key allies, limited strikes, and interventions. These operations will likely pose the most frequent challenge for U.S. forces and cumulatively require significant commitments over time.²¹

This statement in the NSS provides clear guidance for military leaders: SSC operations will be a primary focus of current and future military operations. If joint doctrine is going to be a useful tool for the CINC, it must remain relevant, and for it to remain relevant, current doctrine must be changed to adequately address airpower employment in the SSC environment in its entirety.

Notes

¹Joint Pub (JP) 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, 10 January 1995, I-3.

²Joint Pub (JP) 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, 24 February 1995, i.

³*Ibid.*, III-3.

Notes

⁴*Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986*, 99th Cong., 2nd Sess., H.R. 3622, (1 October 1986): 100 STAT. 1014.

⁵JP 0-2, IV-3.

⁶JP 1, viii.

⁷*Ibid.*, III-1.

⁸Donald M. Snow and Dennis M. Drew, *From Lexington To Desert Storm: War and Politics in the American Experience* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1994), 256.

⁹Armed Forces Staff College (AFSC) Pub 1, *The Joint Staff Officers Guide*, 1997, 4-4.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 4-4.

¹¹JP 0-2, i.

¹²AFSC Pub 1, 4-4.

¹³JP 0-2, i.

¹⁴Joint Pub (JP) 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, 1 February 1995, xiii.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷Joint Pub (JP) 3-56.1, *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations*, 14 November 1994, vi.

¹⁸Joint Pub (JP) 3-07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War*, 16 June 1995, III-15.

¹⁹JP 0-2, IV-9.

²⁰JP 3-56.1, vi.

²¹The White House, *A National Security Strategy For A New Century*, May 1997, 12.

Chapter 3

The Future Role of Airpower Employment in SSC Operations

The end of the Cold War does not mean the end of political, ideological, diplomatic, economic, technological, or even military rivalry among nations. It does not mean the end of the struggle for power and influence. It very probably does mean increased instability, unpredictability, and violence in international affairs¹.

—Samuel P. Huntington

This chapter will focus on observations. Specifically, how doctrine has influenced the effectiveness of previous SSC operations, and how the emerging international landscape will necessitate changes to joint doctrine to effectively employ airpower in this environment.

Operation EL DORADO CANYON

The political tension between the United States and Libya's leader, Muammar Qaddafi, began in earnest in 1981 and culminated in 1986 with Operation EL DORADO CANYON. The air strikes against targets in Libya had one primary political objective, to let Qaddafi and other state leaders who sponsored terrorism know that there would be costs associated with their activities. "The President's goal was to preempt, or disrupt, and discourage further Libyan operations abroad and to teach Qaddafi a lesson that the practice of state-sponsored terrorism carried a high cost."² The stated political and mission objectives were limited and readily suited to the application of airpower.

Planning for this operation revolved around destroying five stationary targets which were clearly associated with training terrorists.³ The targets were subdivided into two specific target area groups. The Tripoli area, was attacked by the U.S. Air Force, and the Benghazi area, was attacked by the U.S. Navy.⁴ The delineation of target areas between the two services simplified planning to a certain extent and aided command and control of the operation.

There was no single commander designated to lead this operation. Command and control was disjointed and delineated between separate AORs. USCINCEUR formally initiated planning for Operation EL DORADO CANYON, with considerable input from Washington, and acted as the air commander through his deputy.⁵ Commander, Sixth Fleet, was the execution commander, but only controlled U.S. Air Force aircraft as they entered his designated AOR.⁶ This was a joint operation which minimized joint action.

The designated targets were completely destroyed or significantly damaged. Qaddafi retreated from the international public forum, and for a while, Libyan sponsored terrorism was significantly curtailed. The U.S. attacks against Libya sent a clear message to Qaddafi, there would be costs associated with state-sponsored terrorism. The mission achieved the stated policy objectives.

Doctrinal Observations

This air operation was conducted prior to the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols. While joint warfare was conducted previous to Goldwater-Nichols, it was usually conducted to further service parochialism (i.e. service representation in an operation to further their budget concerns, service relevancy, etc.), not because of operational necessity. Operation EL DORADO CANYON was characteristic of those conducted in

Vietnam, where the U.S. Air Force had their route packs, and the U.S. Navy had theirs, with one huge exception. EL DORADO CANYON's objectives were clearly articulated by the administration and the military strategy selected was congruent with those objectives. While both air forces used different tactics and employment concepts, military planners used the strengths and weaknesses of each air force appropriately for the desired military effect. At the time of this operation, the U.S. Navy was well on its way to becoming a six-hundred ship navy and the U.S. Air Force had approximately thirty-eight fighter wing equivalents with the goal of reaching forty. Both the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Navy could conduct effective air operations without the aid of the other. In short, they had enough assets, and there was no operational need for joint employment. Hence, there was no requirement for a joint doctrine to guide joint airpower employment. Furthermore, in this context, joint warfare was minimized to preclude the inevitable operational obstacles encountered when trying to merge two separate doctrinal concepts to produce a unity of effort. When joint employment was necessary, it was limited to those mission areas in which both services had compatible employment doctrine. Operation EL DORADO CANYON was a successful operation in that it achieved its objectives. The success of this mission was an exception to previous air operations such the air strike against Lebanon in 1982, and DESERT ONE in 1980 – both of which were dismal failures. Operation EL DORADO CANYON was characterized by unity of effort without unity of command or a relevant joint doctrine. The result was unity of effort without a relevant joint doctrine to guide the employment of these forces.

Operation EL DORADO CANYON could have benefited from the designation of a JFACC to coordinate and simplify the planning and execution of the mission. As it turned out, operational execution of the mission encountered few unanticipated difficulties which could have precluded mission success. The lack of a JFACC was overcome by the “brute force” method of planning and execution—unlimited personnel, resources, and time. The methods used to plan and execute Operation EL DORADO CANYON are no longer feasible for U.S. military forces. Goldwater-Nichols has mandated that U.S. forces will operate jointly, and the resource constrained environment demands that different services will provide different and complementary capabilities to the CINC. Hence, when conducting joint air operations in a SSC, a JFACC and a relevant doctrine is required for success.

Operation DESERT STRIKE

Operation DESERT STRIKE was conducted in September of 1996. This was not the first time air strikes had been used against Iraq after the Gulf War, but the third in a series of attacks which began after the Gulf War. According to President Clinton, the objectives of Operation DESERT STRIKE were to make Saddam pay for his actions and protect forces patrolling the southern no-fly zone.

Our objectives are limited, but clear: to make Saddam pay a price for the latest act of brutality, reducing his ability to threaten his neighbors and America's interests. First, we are extending the no-fly zone in southern Iraq. This will deny Saddam control of Iraqi air space from the Kuwaiti border to the southern suburbs of Baghdad, and significantly restrict Iraq's ability to conduct offensive operations in the region. Second, to protect the safety of our aircraft enforcing this no-fly zone, our cruise missiles struck Saddam's air defense capabilities in southern Iraq.⁷

The stated military objective was to protect UN assets patrolling the southern no-fly zone by disabling existing Iraqi anti-aircraft systems south of the 33rd parallel.⁸ The most significant planning consideration for USCENTCOM was the inability to use any of the assets which belonged to Operation SOUTHERN WATCH and Operation NORTHERN WATCH.⁹ This was a political constraint imposed upon military commanders by the NCA. Assets from NAVCENT, the naval component of USCENTCOM, and B-52's from USACOM were used to conduct this air operation. Additional U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force assets provided support. According to Secretary of Defense Perry, "Air Force involvement helped spread the work. Two benefits: Air Force missiles have a 2,000-pound warhead, twice the payload of Navy missiles. And their participation demonstrated U.S. power to strike when ships or bases are not nearby."¹⁰ Every aspect of this operation was joint, from planning to execution.

Was the goal of this mission achieved? According to President Clinton, "...I'm satisfied that this mission has achieved the objectives we set out for it, and our defense advisors from the Secretary of Defense to General Shalikashvili to our commander in the area all believe that we did what was necessary and they feel good about where we are now."¹¹ However, just 15 days after the air strikes, on a visit to Kuwait, Secretary of Defense Perry stated, "...Iraq had rebuilt air defense units and fired six missiles at U.S. warplanes since U.S. missile strikes against Iraq in early September."¹² Secretary Perry's remarks appear to conflict with the President's statement released just after the mission. In fact, the danger to coalition airmen had most likely increased since they were now required to patrol an even greater portion of Iraqi airspace which contained even more "operational" anti-air defense units. It is clear this mission did not achieve the stated

policy objectives and most probably strained the coalition arrangements with host nations in the region.

Doctrinal Observations

Operation DESERT STRIKE illustrates the complexities of airpower application in this type of environment, from the contextual elements surrounding the actual mission to the international environment in which it was executed. The engagement environment in which this operation was executed is one in which the United States needs to be effective, both diplomatically and militarily. This is the future, where allies may or may not be willing participants in specific operations. The adversary will probably be as obstinate as the current Iraqi government. And most importantly, the United States may have to act unilaterally to achieve its national security objectives much to the dismay of the international community. For airpower to be effective in this environment, it must be applied appropriately, as part of an achievable strategy. Granted, the end result of a bomb delivered from an aircraft or ship is that something tangible will be destroyed. But the net effect of that destruction must encompass the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of conflict. In SSC operations, like large-scale operations, the orchestration of forces at the operational level of war must encompass all strategic and tactical considerations to ensure success. However, the short duration and limited scope of a SSC operation requires that all three levels of war must be planned together—they have a symbiotic relationship with one another. The symbiotic relationship between the different levels of war differentiates the use of airpower in large-scale operations from SSC operations. The strategic, operational, and tactical objectives of a SSC operation must be achieved simultaneously in a manner which achieves the political objectives.

The planning and execution considerations of a large-scale military campaign are not a “luxury” military commanders have when conducting SSC operations. SSC operations are characterized by short duration and decisive action. Hence, the doctrinal nature of airpower employment in the context the SSC environment is decidedly different from any other context, and requires that an appropriate distinction be articulated in joint doctrine. Operation DESERT STRIKE highlights the differences in today’s complex engagement environment from those of the past.

The designation of a JFACC would have provided the CINC and the NCA with one very important input—that airpower application in Operation DESERT STRIKE could not have achieved the desired objectives which the President stated. The intrinsic ability of the JFACC to understand what airpower can and cannot do in a given situation provides the JFC, CINC, and the NCA with invaluable guidance which other component commanders are not trained to provide. The use of airpower in a SSC operation must be part of a congruent military strategy to achieve the desired policy objectives. The failure of Operation DESERT STRIKE to achieve the stated policy objectives effectively illustrates the need for the designation of a JFACC when conducting these types of air operations to prevent the misapplication of airpower. It is the JFACC’s responsibility to advise the CINC on the appropriate use of airpower. In Operation DESERT STRIKE there was inadequate advise on the proper use of airpower because a JFACC was not designated.

Emerging Strategic Environment

The future international landscape is perhaps more complicated than it was during the Cold War. The bipolar dynamics of the Cold War which established the process of

international conduct have been replaced with fragmentation and uncertainty. Managing this environment is difficult at best. The United States has chosen a strategy of selective engagement. This equates to an increase in forward presence and crisis intervention, consistent with the strategy of selective engagement, and in concert with the international community.

In his article, “The Clash of Civilizations”, Samuel Huntington states the dynamics of the emerging international environment are increasingly tied to regional civilizations which will create instability and conflict for the future.¹³ In her article “National Fragmentation, Ethnicity, and the New World Order”, Vicki J. Rast describes how the resurgence of nationalism, ethnicity, and separatism are combining to create a fragmented and conflicting international landscape.¹⁴ This in turn results in increased regional instability and manifests itself in open conflict and bloodshed.¹⁵ Whatever the reasons, the fact is regional conflict is increasing, both in frequency and intensity.

In addition to the above, a principle concern of the United States is terrorism and WMD proliferation. In fact, in 1993 terrorists directed approximately one-third of their attacks against the United States.¹⁶ The proliferation of WMD has been enabled in part by technological advancement and the dissolution of the USSR. WMD in the hands of terrorists could be catastrophic for the United States. “FBI director Louis Freeh called the possibility of a nuclear arms sale by members of the Russian Mafia to a terrorist group ‘the greatest long-term threat to the security of the United States.’”¹⁷ The threat of WMD employment by rogue states and terrorists is here today and will likely continue to dominate national security strategy issues well into the foreseeable future.

Future Airpower Application

It is clear the United States, as the only remaining “Superpower”, will have to remain engaged to protect its national security, and to honor treaty and alliance obligations. Additionally, the current demands upon U.S. military forces will, if recent trends are an indication, most likely increase. According to the NSS, the increasing use of U.S. military forces will most likely occur in the MOOTW environment with a corresponding increase in the frequency of SSC operations. Given the unique capability of airpower to engage globally with minimal warning, a large percentage of future SSC operations will be in the form of airpower. An analysis of the emerging engagement environment in this context brings to light one very important question. Can the United States successfully engage in a specific crisis situation? From an airman’s perspective, this consideration is paramount in deciding whether or not airpower should be used. The problem stems from the quantum leap in capability airpower has achieved since the Vietnam War. What once took hundreds of planes and thousands of bombs to accomplish, can now be done by one bomb delivered from one aircraft. As airpower becomes more capable, there is a danger that it may become a false panacea for crisis response. The point to be made here is that there are some situations for which airpower is ideally suited, and there are some situations for which airpower is simply not appropriate. It is critical that when contemplating the use of airpower, regardless of the type of operation, that an airpower expert (a JFACC) be designated to ensure that airpower is employed appropriately.

Currently, the United States is in a position similar to that of Great Britain after WWI. Great Britain still had control of a vast colonial empire which was characterized by conflict and regional disturbances, not unlike what is happening today. As the

governing authority of these colonial regions, the British authorities were responsible for managing or containing the occasional violence which erupted in these colonies. The contextual elements of this environment were shaped by the horror of losing a generation of men in the trenches of WWI, a massive downsizing of military forces, and a rapidly shrinking defense budget. The unique capability of airpower to cover vast distances rapidly, its responsiveness and relative affordability, presented the British with an acceptable alternative to using ground troops.

The emerging international environment is presenting U.S. leaders with contextual elements not unlike those the British leaders experienced after WWI. While the United States is not a colonial power, it does have national security concerns which span the globe. The U.S. military is downsizing, the defense budgets are shrinking, and U.S. forces are engaged globally, on a very broad front. Like the British, the United States cannot afford to send in ground troops to every crisis situation that develops around the globe. In fact, in certain situations, the very nature of the threat will demand an expedient response that only airpower is capable of achieving.

Today, airpower is seen as an effective alternative to ground troops, much as it was by Great Britain in the aftermath of WWI. However, there is one major difference in the contextual landscape with which U.S. leaders must contend; and that is WMD proliferation. The singularly destructive nature of WMD introduces a different type of variable into the crisis-solution equation. This variable is elusive, unpredictable, and alarmingly destructive. “‘The threat is real, and it is upon us today. It is not in the future, it is hear now,’ stated former Secretary of Defense Les Aspin to the National Academy of Sciences in December 1993.”¹⁸ This threat is so overwhelming that an immediate and

disproportionate response may be mandated, and airpower application may be the only viable course of action. “During the latest confrontation between the United States and North Korea, former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger stated in a forum on American defense policy that the North Korean nuclear facilities represented an ‘ideal set of targets’ for airpower.”¹⁹ These targets are indeed ideal for airpower as they are stationary buildings and exact locations are easy to determine. It is very difficult to hide a nuclear reactor. But what about chemical or biological weapons whose location is uncertain? These two forms of WMD are just as destructive as nuclear weapons and demand the same level of crisis response associated with the rogue employment of nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, it is considerably easier to manufacture and hide chemical and biological weapons than nuclear weapons. The inability of the United Nations to determine the extent of Iraq’s WMD program highlights the complexity and scope of this type of targeting problem. The discussion of target selection when contemplating the use of airpower in the SSC environment serves to illustrate the complex nature of the emerging engagement environment. What initially may appear as an ideal target set for airpower to the layman, may be totally inadequate after a detailed analysis by an airman. It is the intrinsic ability of an airman to understand the very nature airpower employment, coupled with the necessity of joint air operations which will mandate the designation of a JFACC in future SSC airpower operations.

The emerging engagement environment is a critical reason for development of an effective joint doctrine to conduct airpower operations in the SSC environment. The complex issues defining the emerging engagement environment coupled with the increasing capability of airpower to achieve strategic effects within it must be fully

addressed by joint doctrine. Like any technology, airpower capability is perishable. The misapplication of airpower in the SSC environment will eventually diminish its ability to be used as an effective policy tool, as demonstrated in Operation DESERT STRIKE. If an operation is designed to stop the rogue employment of WMD, the mission must not fail. The consequences are just too catastrophic to contemplate. In essence, the U.S. military does not have the convenience of time and experience to develop an effective doctrine for airpower application in this environment. The emerging engagement environment implicitly demands that the United States be prepared to engage decisively now and the means by which to do that must be articulated in joint doctrine. The United States has the most capable air forces in the world. Airpower must not become a false panacea for crisis response through its misapplication. The use of a JFACC with a relevant joint doctrine will ensure successful application of airpower in the SSC environment.

Notes

¹Bradley S. Davis, "The Other Weapons Of Mass Destruction: Chemical And Biological," in *Global Security Concerns: Anticipating the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Dr. Karl P. Magyar et al. (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, March 1996), 215.

²Caspar W. Weinberger, *Fighting For Peace: Seven Critical Years in the Pentagon* (New York, N.Y.: Warner Books Inc., 1990), 193.

³James A. Winnefeld and Dana J. Johnson, *Joint Air Operations: Pursuit of Unity in Command and Control, 1942-1991* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1993), 84.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., 87.

⁶Ibid., 86-87.

⁷The White House, "Statement by the President", *Air Force Link*, 26 September 1996, n.p.; on-line, Internet, 6 January 1997, available from <http://www.af.mil/current/dstrike/>

⁸Steven Komarow, "Sophisticated sea-air arsenal employed in two raids", *USA Today*, 4 September 1996, n.p.; on-line, Internet, 14 December 1997, available from <http://www.usatoday.com/news/index/iraq/nirginde.html>.

⁹Ibid.

Notes

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹“Full Text of Clinton’s Speech”, *Associated Press*, 4 September 1996, n.p.; on-line, Internet, 14 December 1997, available from

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/index/iraq/nirginde.html>.

¹²“Perry seeks ant-Iraq alliance but doubts grow”, *Associated Press*, 19 September 1996, n.p.; on-line, Internet, 14 December 1997, available from

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/index/iraq/nirginde.html>.

¹³Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?”, in *Strategic Environment Course Book* (Maxwell AFB Ala.: Air Command and Staff College, October 1997), 48.

¹⁴Vicki J. Rast, “National Fragmentation, Ethnicity, and the New World Order,” in *Global Security Concerns: Anticipating the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Dr. Karl P. Magyar et al. (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, March 1996), 50-53.

¹⁵Ibid., 63.

¹⁶Frank L. Goldstein, “International Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century,” in *Global Security Concerns: Anticipating the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Dr. Karl P. Magyar et al. (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, March 1996), 293.

¹⁷Ibid., 210.

¹⁸Davis, 216.

¹⁹Robert H. Hendricks, “Nuclear Conflict and Nonproliferation Issues in the Twenty-First Century,” in *Global Security Concerns: Anticipating the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Dr. Karl P. Magyar et al. (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, March 1996), 210.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

The nature of modern warfare demands that we fight as a joint team. This was important yesterday, it is essential today, and it will be even more imperative tomorrow¹.

—John M. Shalikashvili
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Is the designation of a JFACC necessary for airpower employment in SSC operations? I asserted that the answer to this question lies in the defined role of the JFACC, how airpower is employed in this environment, and the future role these types of operations will have in achieving policy objectives. The answer to the first part of this question lies in joint doctrine since the JFACC concept was a result of joint doctrine development after the enactment of Goldwater-Nichols. Finding the answer to the remainder of the question required an examination of past experiences and the emerging engagement environment to determine an appropriate response.

The findings were illustrative in that we have used airpower effectively in the past without the designation of a JFACC, but the context of that experience has significantly changed. The main finding was the fact that joint doctrine has not adequately addressed airpower in the SSC environment. Furthermore, that the definitive role of a JFACC is not appropriate nor consistent throughout joint doctrine. Additionally, the National Security Strategy, National Military Strategy, *Joint Vision 2010*, and the QDR clearly state that

military action in the SSC environment will substantially increase in both the near and long term.

Doctrinal Findings

Historical Analysis

Operation EL DORADO CANYON illustrated the effectiveness of air operations when there are relatively unlimited assets available to the commander. An effective joint doctrine was not required due to task delineation between different services. Furthermore, the contextual elements which shaped this engagement environment were relatively simple and straightforward. This resulted in clearly articulated and unambiguous political and military objectives which in turn facilitated the development of a congruent and achievable military strategy. Joint doctrinal considerations were never a factor in the success of this mission because of the contextual environment in which it was executed. While a JFACC would have eased the planning considerations, and streamlined the command and control hierarchy, the contextual and operational environment of the mission did not require the designation of one.

Operation DESERT STRIKE illustrated the complexity of today's international environment and the contextual elements which coalesce to shape it. To state it bluntly, international relations and the principles which guide them are not as clear as they were during the Cold War. In fact, they are completely unpredictable, overshadowed by the proliferation of WMD, and are reactionary in nature. This operation was confronted with the cold realities of an obstinate adversary in Iraq, allies unwilling to support our national security objectives in the region, and a national security strategy which is significantly

more complex than it was during the Cold War. It is an excellent example of the type of engagement environment that U.S. forces can expect in the future. An effective joint doctrine which addresses airpower employment in this type of SSC operation may have prevented its misapplication. As stated previously, SSC operations are inextricably intertwined at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. For these types of operations to be successful, they must be executed in such a manner as to compel an adversary to alter his undesirable behavior. Operation DESERT STRIKE highlights the complexities of MOOTW operations in today's international environment, and provides a look into the future SSC environment. It effectively demonstrates the need to develop a joint doctrine which specifically addresses airpower employment in SSC operations. Additionally, the designation of a JFACC for Operation DESERT STRIKE may have precluded the misapplication of airpower which characterized this operation.

Current Deficiencies

The dilemma airmen face is that each of the service's air forces has its own doctrine guiding airpower application, and inevitably, they are not supporting of one another. This problem is exacerbated when airpower employment in SSC operations is contemplated. These joint air operations are, by nature, limited in scope, but entail the employment of assets on a global scale. Joint doctrine mandates the designation of a functional component commander when forces from two or more services are "operating in the same dimension or medium."² Unfortunately, joint doctrine also provides clear guidance that the JFC may direct his air forces if he deems the designation of a JFACC inappropriate. The result is a joint doctrine which provides limited and conflicting guidance on how to employ airpower in SSC operations.

Regardless of doctrinal definition, the JFACC is the JFC's chief air strategist, with the responsibility to effectively employ airpower as a maneuver force, capable of achieving strategic objectives as well as providing support to surface forces. The capstone joint doctrine publications do not articulate this role and do not provide the CINC with appropriate guidance concerning the use of airpower in the SSC environment. Airpower application in SSC operations is unique in that it may be globally and regionally employed to achieve the desired objectives. The unique employment considerations for airpower in SSC operations are simply not addressed in joint doctrine. Additionally, there is no consistency between operational level joint doctrine and capstone publications to ensure unity of effort at all levels of employment. There is no coherent joint guidance for airpower application in the SSC environment.

Implications for Airpower's Future Role

The implications are clear. The days of unlimited forces at the disposal of the CINC are gone. As stated previously, the strategy of selective engagement calls for an increasing commitment abroad to secure our interests in the context of a significantly reduced military and a fragmenting international landscape. The NMS mandates that "all U.S. forces and systems operate coherently at the strategic, operational, or tactical levels."³ Joint Vision 2010 calls for a primarily CONUS based force with greater mobility and a more robust global power projection capability supported by overseas presence.⁴ In concert with Joint Vision 2010, the QDR calls for more focus on smaller-scale contingency operations. "Based on recent experience and intelligence predictions, the demand for smaller-scale contingency operations is expected to remain high over the next 15 to 20 years."⁵ It is crystal clear that the threat will demand immediate response

and the response will most likely be in the form of an SSC operation. Furthermore, the operation will be joint in nature, and by operational necessity, involve airpower.

Recommendations

The U.S. military is currently evolving into a truly joint fighting force. The service core competencies are integrated by joint doctrine to create a unique synergy ensuring unity of effort on the battlefield. As the United States engages in future operations, these operations will reveal weaknesses. The past successes and failures of airpower in SSC operations have revealed weaknesses which have to be corrected if airpower is going to be effective in future SSC operations. The following recommendations are very basic in concept and are nothing more than part of the evolution process which keeps doctrine relevant.

First, the definition of a JFACC in joint doctrine capstone and operational level publications should be changed to clearly articulate his role and responsibilities as the JFC's air strategist, and not just the coordinator of air missions. The JFACC is the commander responsible for developing the air scheme of maneuver to achieve the JFC's objectives. This definition should be consistent throughout joint doctrine publications to ensure there is no question whatsoever for military commanders as to the role of the JFACC.

Secondly, joint doctrine should articulate the unique requirements of applying airpower in the SSC environment in order to provide a common framework for mission development and execution for all engaged forces. While the scope of the mission may not warrant the designation of a task force or a joint force, the unique considerations of

joint airpower employment in the SSC environment do justify the designation of either a task force or joint task force.

Finally, that a JFACC be designated to command SSC operations when the application of airpower is mandated. This recommendation is implicit in the first two recommendations. The complex issues surrounding the employment of airpower mandate the designation of an airman to command it, from beginning to end.

Summary

As our missions change, so must the blueprint for executing them. Doctrine is the bedrock on which our blueprint for fighting is built. To stay ahead of our adversaries, and to be prepared for effective engagement our doctrine must evolve with our missions. This is what keeps doctrine relevant, and relevant doctrine keeps the military prepared.

Notes

¹Department of Defense, *Joint Vision 2010*, (Washington D.C.: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1997), preface.

²Joint Pub (JP) 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, 24 February 1995, GL-6.

³Department of Defense, *National Military Strategy of the United States of America: Shape, Respond, Prepare Now: A Military Strategy for a New Era*, (Washington D.C.: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1997), 22.

⁴*Joint Vision 2010*, 3.

⁵Department of Defense, *Report Of The Quadrennial Defense Review*, (Washington D.C.: Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997), 11.

Appendix A

Notes

1. Commanders of each of the different service branches are fully aware they have an air force. From their point of view, they are justifiably hesitant to give up operational control of their forces to a single air commander. They may not have them available when they need them. An excellent example can be illustrated by the role of Marine air assets when employed with a JFACC designated. “The primary mission of the MAGTF air combat element is the support of the MAGTF ground element. During joint operations, the MAGTF air assets will normally be in support of the MAGTF mission. The MAGTF commander will make sorties available to the joint force commander, for tasking through the joint force air component commander, for air defense, long-range interdiction, and long-range reconnaissance.”¹ Each service has a designated role for their air force, and it’s the commanders responsibility to ensure his assets are used appropriately. While this is important, roles are changing, and with this change comes a different way of doing business. The commanders must realize the importance their assets bring to the team and that they must be integrated appropriately to ensure joint success. Goldwater-Nichols mandates joint operations using different assets from each service, and airpower is not exempt from this requirement.
2. The airstrikes against Iraq since the Gulf War have failed to achieve anything except temporary and fleeting problems for the Iraqi Government and military. The Iraqi leadership still has not complied with all of the United Nations Security Council resolutions. As a result, the United States and its coalition partners have maintained a robust military presence in the region to contain Iraqi aggression against its neighbors.
3. The term “engagement environment” is used to describe the complete environment in which U.S. forces will operate. The environment encompasses a variety of factors which include: the international strategic environment, advanced technological progress, and the dynamic nature of the threat to regional and world peace. Additionally, the engagement environment encompasses the perceptions world leaders have about how the military IOP can be used to create and maintain peace in a world or region characterized by conflict. The use of the phrase “engagement environment” in this paper is an attempt to combine all of the tangible and intangible factors which describe the backdrop in which U.S. military forces will employ into an appropriate phrase.

4. During Operation EL DORADO CANYON, the execution commander, Admiral Frank B. Kelso II, Commander, Sixth Fleet, was a surface warfare officer.

Notes

- ¹ Joint Pub (JP) 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, 24 February 1995, IV-4.

Glossary

AFDD	Air Force Doctrine Document
AO	Area of Operation
AOR	Area of Responsibility
CJCS	Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff
CONUS	Continental United States
DOD	Department of Defense
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
IOP	Instrument of Power
JFACC	Joint Force Air Component Commander
JFC	Joint Force Commander
JTF	Joint Task Force
MOOTW	Military Operations Other Than War
NAVCENT	Central Navy
NCA	National Command Authorities
OPCON	Operational Control
OPLAN	Operational Plan
SOF	Special Operations Forces
TPFDD	Time Phased Force Deployment Data
USACOM	United States Atlantic Command
USCENTCOM	United States Central Command
USCINCEUR	United States Commander Europe
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
UN	United Nations
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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